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CHINNASWAMY STADIUM FAILS TO GET APPROVAL TO HOST MATCHES

The Vijay Hazare Trophy matches, supposed to be held at M Chinnaswamy in Bengaluru, moved elsewhere after government denied permission

COMMITTEE TO SUBMIT REPORT TO GOVT

Following the stampede during RCB's IPL celebrations on June 4, the stadium has not hosted any games. The Karnataka State Association sought permission to host without any crowd. The state home minister had constituted a committee that visited the venue to review on Monday and denied their request. They will submit the findings to the government

GAMES MOVED TO BCCI CoE, SAYS KSCA

- With no permission to host the 50-over matches, KSCA said in a statement that the fixtures have been moved to BCCI Centre of Excellence for the time being
- Both Virat Kohli and Rishabh Pant, who were supposed to play at the venue, will now turn up for Delhi against Andhra at BCCI CoE | P19

May 3

WAS WHEN THE LAST OFFICIAL IPL MATCH WAS HELD AT THE VENUE

CHENNAI ▪ MADURAI ▪ VIJAYAWADA ▪ BENGALURU ▪ KOCHI ▪ HYDERABAD ▪ VISAKHAPATNAM ▪ COIMBATORE ▪ KOZHIKODE ▪ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM ▪ BELAGAVI ▪ BHUBANESWAR ▪ SHIVAMOGGA ▪ MANGALURU ▪ TIRUPATI ▪ TIRUCHY ▪ TIRUNELVELI ▪ SAMBALPUR ▪ HUBBALLI ▪ DHARMAPURI ▪ KOTTAYAM ▪ KANNUR ▪ VILLUPURAM ▪ KOLLAM ▪ TADEPALLIGUDEM ▪ NAGAPATTINAM ▪ THRISSUR ▪ KALABURAGI

Court rejects UP govt plea to nix charges in Akhlaq case

NAMITA BAJPAI @ Lucknow

A fast-track court in Surajpur on Tuesday rejected the Uttar Pradesh government's application to withdraw charges in the 2015 Mohammad Akhlaq lynching case, while directing that the trial be fast-tracked with daily hearings.

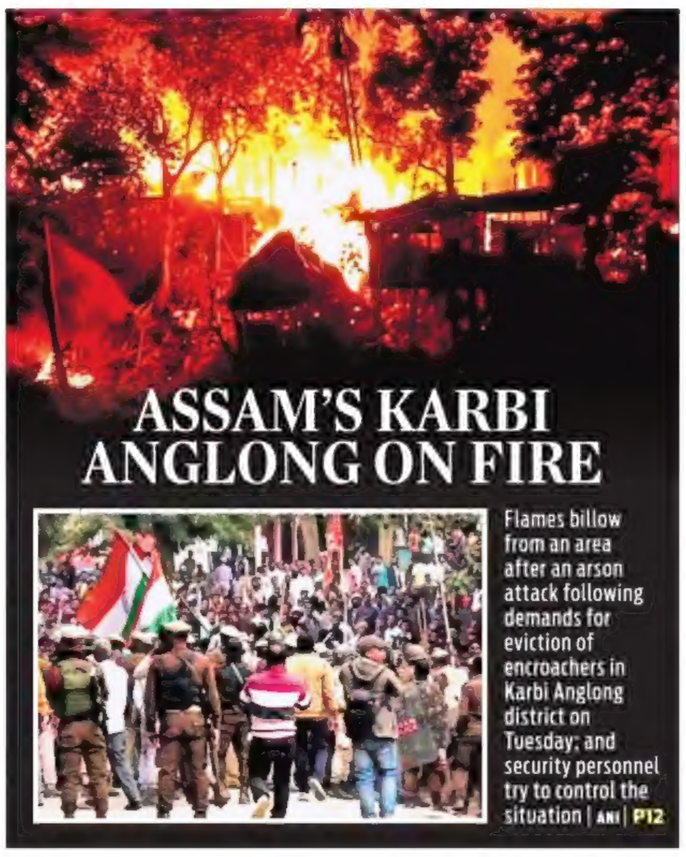
Additional District Judge Saurabh Dwivedi ruled that the case be categorised as "most important" and directed police authorities, including the Gautam Buddha Nagar Police Commissioner, to ensure protection of crucial evidence. The court scheduled the next hearing for January 6.

Mohammad Akhlaq

Akhlaq, 50, was lynched by a mob in Dadri's Bisada village on September 28, 2015, following rumours of cow slaughter. He died from injuries sustained in the attack, while his son Danish, who tried to intervene, narrowly survived.

The state government had moved the court to withdraw charges on October 15, citing inconsistent witness statements, absence of recovered weapons, and lack of prior enmity between the accused and the victim.

Noida Police had registered an FIR at Jarcha police station under IPC sections 302 (murder), 307 (attempt to murder),148 (rioting with deadly weapon), 149 (unlawful assembly), 323 (assault), 504 (intent to disturb peace) on the basis of a complaint by Akhlaq's wife.



ASSAM'S KARBI ANGLONG ON FIRE

Flames billow from an area after an arson attack following demands for eviction of encroachers in Karbi Anglong district on Tuesday; and security personnel try to control the situation | AKI | P12

Jaishankar announces aid, builds on first responder role, commitment to reconstruction

$450 mn relief package for cyclone-hit Sri Lanka

JAYANTH JACOB @ New Delhi

INDIA on Tuesday pledged a $450 million reconstruction and recovery package to Sri Lanka following the devastation caused by Cyclone Ditwah, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar announced during his visit to Colombo as a special envoy of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Speaking after talks with Sri Lankan Foreign Minister Vijitha Herath, Jaishankar said he carried a personal message from Prime Minister Modi to President Anura Kumara Dissanayake, whom he met earlier in the day. "The letter from Prime Minister Modi builds on our First Responder role and commits a reconstruction package of USD 450 million."

Jaishankar said the package would comprise $350 million in concessional lines of credit and $100 million in grants. The assistance will focus on rebuilding roads, railways and bridges; housing; health and education facilities; agriculture; and strengthening disaster preparedness.

"We are conscious that work towards mitigating the impact of Cyclone Ditwah must be done in the quickest time possible," he said and added that India and Sri Lanka were finalising coordination mechanisms for rapid delivery.

Jaishankar also pointed to longer-term support, including boosting Indian tourism and foreign direct investment. "India stands firmly with Sri Lanka more than ever before," he said, expressing confidence in the island nation's resilience as it recovers from the disaster.

Detailing India's emergency response, Jaishankar said relief operations under Operation Sagar Bandhu began on the day Cyclone Ditwah made landfall. "Our Aircraft Carrier INS Vikrant and INS Udayagiri were present at Colombo and delivered relief material, after which helicopters were deployed," he said. Indian Air Force Mi-17 helicopters operated in Sri Lanka for more than two weeks, while an 80-member National Disaster Response Force team carried out rescue and relief work.

The Indian Army also set up a field hospital near Kandy with 85 medical personnel, providing emergency care to over 8,000 people. Besides, army engineers erected a Bailey bridge at Kilinochchi using equipment transported by C-17 aircraft, while another bridge at Chilaw is currently under construction.

According to a World Bank Group Global Rapid Post-Disaster Damage Estimation (GRADE) report, the cyclone caused an estimated $4.1 billion in damage, which is around 4 percent of Sri Lanka's GDP.

A Bailey Bridge built by the Indian Army in Lanka's Kilinochchi; and (Inset) S Jaishankar hands over Prime Minister Narendra Modi's letter to President Anura Kumara Dissanayake | PTI

India, Bangladesh summon envoys amid protests

JAYANTH JACOB @ New Delhi

INDIA and Bangladesh summoned each other's envoys on Tuesday to lodge formal protests over developments straining bilateral ties, as widespread demonstrations erupted across India following the lynching of a Hindu man in Bangladesh.

Dhaka summoned Indian High Commissioner Pranay Verma on Tuesday morning, expressing concern over an "unsatisfactory security situation" at Bangladesh's missions in India. Foreign Secretary Asad Alam Siam raised issues related to protests outside diplomatic premises in New Delhi, Kolkata and Agartala.

"The foreign secretary conveyed Bangladesh's serious concern and emphasised the host country's responsibility under the Vienna Convention to ensure full protection of diplomatic premises," a source said.

Hours later, India summoned Bangladesh High Commissioner Riaz Hamidullah for the second time in a week over security concerns for Indian missions in Bangladesh. India urged a thorough probe into student leader Hadi's death rather than blaming India, noting that unverified claims sparked anti-India protests, including an attempt to storm the Indian Assistant High Commission in Chittagong.

The exchanges followed protests by Hindu right-wing groups across New Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai and Jammu, among many, against the December 18 lynching of Dipu Chandra Das, 25, in Mymensingh, allegedly over blasphemy charges.

In New Delhi, VHP and Bajrang Dal cadres broke barricades and attempted to march towards the Bangladesh High Commission.

Out-of-job techie shoots estranged wife dead on road

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

A 39-year-old assistant manager with a public sector bank was shot dead in full public view, allegedly by her estranged husband on Industrial Town Road in Magadi Road police limits, in Bengaluru, on Tuesday evening. The accused, who shot four bullets at her from a point-blank range, later surrendered to the police.

The deceased, Bhuvaneshwari, worked as an assistant manager at the Basaveshwaranagar branch of Union Bank of India. She was staying in Rajajinagar with her two children. She was married to Balamurugan (40), who worked as a software engineer at a private company in Whitefield but is unemployed now. He was living alone in KP Agrahara.

The couple, who hailed from Salem in Tamil Nadu, got married in 2011 and shifted to Whitefield in Bengaluru in 2018. They have been living separately for the past one-and-a-half years after troubles in their marriage.

After finishing her work, Bhuvaneshwari was walking home, which is around 3 km from her office, around 6.45 pm on Tuesday. Balamurugan, who had been waiting for her outside the bank, followed her for a distance before chasing her and firing five rounds at her from behind. Two bullets struck her head and two hit her hands while the other missed the target. P7

EXPRESS READ

HC asks Mallya when he is coming to India

MUMBAI: The Bombay HC on Tuesday asked fugitive businessman Vijay Mallya when he intends to return to India and said it will not hear its plea till he submits to to Indian jurisdiction.

24L names removed under SIR in Kerala

T'PURAM: Over 24 lakh names have been removed in the draft voters' list prepared as part of the SIR of the electoral roll in Kerala that was published by the ECI on Tuesday. P7

New Epstein files have Don references

NEW YORK: A new batch of Jeffrey Epstein files released Tuesday contains numerous references to US President Donald Trump, including documents detailing flights he took on Epstein's jet.

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Govt work is outsourced work: 1 lakh contract staff keep state wheels turning

ASHWINI M SRIPAD @ Bengaluru

CLOSE to one lakh posts in various departments of the Karnataka government are being handled by outsourced employees. One of the main reasons for this is the government's failure to fill up vacancies.

The state government now has 5.2 lakh permanent staff in 72 departments, boards and corporations, while there are 2.5 lakh vacancies.

These vacant posts are the ones that have been filled with contract employees. Though such hiring cuts costs for the government as benefits are not paid to them like regular employees, there is a serious lack of accountability.

DEPTS WITH MOST OUTSOURCED POSTS

- Agri: 15,824
- Animal Husbandry: 15,376
- BC welfare: 11,424
- Cooperation: 6,511
- DPAR: 5,753

"If such staff get involved in corruption or commit mistakes, the government cannot conduct a departmental inquiry. Since they are not permanent employees, they are not scared of consequences of their wrongful actions," said a senior official, requesting anonymity.

Of the 96,844 outsourced employees, close to 16,000 are with the Agriculture Department and lack of regular employees could impact the delivery of government programmes to farmers. Animal husbandry and Backward Classes Welfare departments too have a large number of contract employees. Former Law Minister Suresh Kumar told *TNIE* that the government is encouraging exploitation in the name of outsourcing. CONTINUED ON : P4

BLUEBIRD
MISSION COUNTDOWN BEGINS

ISRO will launch the Bluebird Block-2 spacecraft on board launch vehicle LVM3-M6 at 8.54 am on Wednesday from Sriharikota

Assessees sore over taxman's 'nudge' to rectify ITR

DIPAK MONDAL @ New Delhi

HOLIDAY mood dampened for lakhs of taxpayers ahead of the Christmas and New Year with the tax department seeking clarification on the discrepancies in their returns for assessment year 2025-26.

Sources said the income tax department's automated risk management framework flagged a high volume of cases where refund claims are substantially high and do not align with official data. Such refunds have been put on hold pending verification.

Tax professionals noted a surge in alerts targeting taxpayers who may be misreporting information. Key triggers for these investigations include Form 16 mismatches, suspicious deductions, and non-disclosures of assets.

According to the income tax department, 'identified' taxpayers are being contacted through SMS and email under the Non-intrusive Usage of Data to Guide and Enable (NUDGE) campaign to correct errors. The due date for filing revised ITRs is December 31.

Sources said 5-10 lakh taxpayers have been contacted under NUDGE campaign so far.

Certain taxpayers have claimed ineligible refunds
— Tax dept